



BOROUGH OF BEDFORD

Annual Report
ON THE
HEALTH OF BEDFORD
FOR THE YEAR
1950

BY

G. K. BOWES, M.A., M.D., M.R.C.P., D.P.H.

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

together with the Report of

F. C. HAYNES, Cert.San.I., M.S.I.A.

CHIEF SANITARY INSPECTOR

BEDFORD

DIEMER AND REYNOLDS LIMITED





BOROUGH OF BEDFORD

REPORT

OF THE

Medical Officer of Health

For the Year 1950



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PUBLIC HEALTH DEPARTMENT,
TOWN HALL,
BEDFORD.

August, 1951.

*To His Worship the Mayor, Aldermen and Councillors
of the Borough of Bedford*

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

I have the honour to present my Annual Report for 1950.

To the writer of these reports from year to year they seem to reach a uniform level of dullness. This is so far to be looked upon as an advantage that any matter of unusual interest which requires a full report or exceptional comment often indicates that, for some reason not to be explained or on account of some failure in the services designed to prevent illness, infectious or other disease has attained a height above the now usual low level of prevalence.

The figures to be given in the report indicate no exceptional prevalence of any particular disease, and measured by this usual standard, health remains good.

I have to express my thanks to the members of the Town Council, especially of the Public Health Committee, for their uniform support and sympathy in the work of the department ; and for help in all ways to the staff of the department, to my colleagues in other departments of the Council, and to the staff of other authorities with which the Public Health Department of the Town Council now works in close connection and co-operation.

I am,

Your obedient servant,

G. K. BOWES,

Medical Officer of Health.

Public Health Committee

(December 31st, 1950)

COUNCILLOR MRS. D. GEE, *Chairman*

COUNCILLOR L. H. NICHOLSON, *Vice-Chairman*

ALDERMAN R. TURNER, J.P. (The Mayor)

COUNCILLOR A. M. BALL

COUNCILLOR R. A. H. COOPER

COUNCILLOR MRS. M. F. M. GREAVES

COUNCILLOR MRS. M. ROGERS

COUNCILLOR L. E. T. SALSURY

COUNCILLOR A. R. SHARP

Public Health Staff

Medical Officer of Health

G. K. BOWES, M.A., M.D., M.R.C.P., D.P.H.

Deputy Medical Officer of Health

F. A. WILLIAMS, M.B., B.S.(Lond.), M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P., D.P.H.(Vict.)

Chief Sanitary Inspector

F. C. HAYNES, Cert.R.San.I., M.S.I.A.

Deputy Chief Sanitary Inspector and Food Inspector

J. F. WILKINSON, M.R.San.I., Cert.Meat Inspection R.San.I., M.S.I.A.

Sanitary Inspectors

E. J. CONSTABLE, A.R.San.I., Cert.Meat Inspection R.San.I.

F. W. GOLDSMITH, A.R.San.I., M.S.I.A.

Chief Clerk

F. J. DIX

Clerks

P. G. ALLSTON

R. F. RAWLINS

MISS B. M. BECKWITH

Disinfectors and Drain Testers

G. V. BURRIDGE

F. WOOTTON

Rodent Destruction Operator and Mortuary Attendant

H. W. COMMINS

BOROUGH OF BEDFORD

Annual Report of The Medical Officer of Health

G. K. BOWES, M.A., M.D., M.R.C.P., D.P.H.

I. Vital Statistics

1. Summary of Statistics

Area of Borough (in acres)	4,972
Population :—							
Census 1931 (before extension)	40,554
Census 1931 (including area added 1st April, 1934)	42,606
Registrar-General's Estimated Civilian Population for 1950	53,770
Number of Inhabited Houses :—							
Census 1931 (including added area)	10,431
According to Rate Books (31st December, 1950)	15,124
Number of Families or Separate Occupiers (Census 1931, including added area)	11,227
Rateable Value (30th December, 1950)	£402,926
Yield of One Penny Rate (30th December, 1950)	£1,605

(a) EXTRACTS FROM VITAL STATISTICS FOR THE YEAR 1950

Live Births :—				<i>Total</i>	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>Rate per 1,000</i>
Legitimate	774	399	375	
Illegitimate	60	36	24	
				—	—	—	
Total	834	435	399	Birth rate 15.5
				—	—	—	

Stillbirths :—							
Legitimate	24	15	9	
Illegitimate	1	—	1	
				—	—	—	
Total	25	15	10	Rate 0.46
				—	—	—	

Deaths	618	323	295	Death rate : Uncorrected 11.5 Corrected 10.9 (see page 9)
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Deaths of Infants under 1 year of age :—						
Total	27	15	12
				—	—	—
Legitimate	20	10	10
Illegitimate	7	5	2

Deaths of Infants under 4 weeks of age :—						
Total	19	10	9
				—	—	—
Legitimate	14	7	7
Illegitimate	5	3	2

Number of women dying in, or in consequence of, Childbirth :—							
From Sepsis	—
Other Causes	—

Deaths of Infants under one year of age per 1,000 Live Births :—
 Legitimate 24.0, Illegitimate 8.4 ; total, 32.4.

(b) COMMENTS ON STATISTICS

Some of the figures given in the summary of statistics just quoted will receive comments under their appropriate headings. Comment may here be made on the fact that, while the population has increased by roughly 26 per cent. between the 1931 census and the year under review, the number of inhabited houses has increased by roughly 45 per cent., and this although a large amount of overcrowding and sharing of houses by more than one family is known to exist in many houses in the Borough, certainly no less at the end than at the beginning of the period. The explanation must be sought in the fact that a given population now contains a greater number of family units than twenty years ago, each family unit normally requiring, and where possible possessing, a separate dwelling ; and this increase in number of family units is in its turn due not only to the smaller size of families, but also to the longer survival, after their families have left them, of aged persons, who perhaps do not live with their children in their old age as often as formerly.

The fact, of course, that a given population now contains a greater number of family units than the same population would have contained some decades ago, means that the problem of housing the population is on this account greater than it would have been in the past, a matter to be referred to later.

2. Causes of Death

Cause of Death								Males	Females
All Causes								323	295
1.	Tuberculosis, respiratory	6	3
2.	Tuberculosis, other	—	—
3.	Syphilitic disease	2	—
4.	Diphtheria	—	—
5.	Whooping Cough	—	—
6.	Meningococcal infections	—	—
7.	Acute poliomyelitis	1	—
8.	Measles	—	—
9.	Other infective and parasitic diseases	—	1
10.	Malignant neoplasm, stomach	12	7
11.	Malignant neoplasm, lung, bronchus	17	1
12.	Malignant neoplasm, breast	—	10
13.	Malignant neoplasm, uterus	—	12
14.	Other malignant and lymphatic neoplasm	27	26
15.	Leukaemia, aleukaemia	3	2
16.	Diabetes	1	1
17.	Vascular lesions of nervous system	36	43
18.	Coronary disease, angina	51	23
19.	Hypertension with heart disease	2	15
20.	Other heart disease	54	58
21.	Other circulatory disease	13	16
22.	Influenza	1	2
23.	Pneumonia	7	12
24.	Bronchitis	18	8
25.	Other diseases of respiratory system	3	1
26.	Ulcer of stomach and duodenum...	3	1
27.	Gastritis, enteritis and diarrhoea	5	4
28.	Nephritis and nephrosis	9	3
29.	Hyperplasia of prostate	8	—
30.	Pregnancy, childbirth, abortion	—	—
31.	Congenital malformations	2	5
32.	Other defined and ill-defined diseases	24	32
33.	Motor vehicle accidents	6	1
34.	All other accidents	5	5
35.	Suicide	5	3
36.	Homicide and operations of war	2	—

The causes of death given in the foregoing table differ from those of previous years, the nomenclature and classification of the Registrar-General having been altered in order to bring them into line with the International Statistical Classification adopted by the World Health Organisation in 1948.

3. Population

The population as given by the Registrar-General was 53,770, which shows an increase of 780 on the figure of the previous year. The excess of births over deaths, or the natural increase, during the year was 216. The difference between the actual and the natural increase was due to immigration into the area, and in view of recent development in Bedford and its neighbourhood there is every likelihood that immigration figures will be higher in future years.

4. Death Rate

The uncorrected death rate was 11.5. The Registrar-General has supplied a comparability factor by which allowance may be made for the fact that the age and sex constitution of Bedford is different from that of the country as a whole, and on multiplying by this factor of .95 a figure of 10.9 is obtained, a corrected death rate which may be compared with 11.6 for England and Wales. For the previous years the corresponding figures were 11.0 for Bedford and 11.7 for England and Wales. The death rate for Bedford, therefore, after allowing for age and sex constitution, is well below that of the country as a whole.

Comments may be made on certain individual causes of death. Influenza, a cause of mortality which varies from year to year, caused three deaths only. No deaths were caused by diphtheria, scarlet fever, measles or whooping cough. One death was caused by poliomyelitis. Tuberculosis of all forms caused nine deaths. Cancer (malignant neoplasm) caused 112 deaths. The number of deaths from heart disease and circulatory disease was large, namely 232. Though some of these deaths, especially those due to coronary disease with its 74 deaths, occur before extreme old age is reached, yet to a great extent the number of deaths caused by heart disease is an indication of the extent to which the population survives to old age when the heart and the circulation fail through natural processes of decay. Suicide caused eight deaths. There were seven deaths of residents due to road accidents, of which three took place within and four outside the Borough boundary. No deaths of non-residents from this cause occurred within the borough. The two deaths under the last heading, classified as homicide, were cases of infanticide in new-born infants.

5. Birth Rates, Civilian Death Rates, Analysis of Mortality and Case Rates for Certain Infectious Diseases in the Year 1950.
Provisional figures based on Quarterly Returns.

(England and Wales, London, 126 Great Towns and 148 Smaller Towns)

	Bedford	England and Wales	126 County Boroughs and Great Towns including London	148 Smaller Towns (Resident Population 25,000 to 50,000 at 1931 Census)	London Administrative County
		Rates per 1,000 Civilian Population			
BIRTHS					
Live births	15.5	15.8	17.6	16.7	17.8
Still births	0.46	0.37	0.45	0.33	0.36
DEATHS					
All causes	10.9	11.6	12.3	11.6	11.8
Typhoid and paratyphoid	—	—	—	—	—
Whooping cough	—	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01
Diphtheria	—	—	—	—	—
Tuberculosis	0.17	0.36	0.42	0.33	0.39
Influenza... ..	0.06	0.10	0.09	0.10	0.07
Smallpox	—	—	—	—	—
Acute poliomyelitis (including polioencephalitis)	0.02	0.02	0.02	0.02	0.02
Pneumonia	0.35	0.46	0.49	0.45	0.48
NOTIFICATIONS (corrected)					
Typhoid fever	0.02	—	—	—	0.01
Paratyphoid fever ...	—	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01
Meningoccal infections ...	0.02	0.03	0.03	0.02	0.03
Scarlet fever	2.73	1.50	1.56	1.61	1.23
Whooping cough	3.42	3.60	3.97	3.15	3.21
Diphtheria	—	0.02	0.03	0.02	0.03
Erysipelas	0.32	0.17	0.19	0.16	0.17
Smallpox	—	—	—	—	—
Measles	12.57	8.39	8.76	8.36	6.57
Pneumonia	1.19	0.70	0.77	0.61	0.50
Acute poliomyelitis (including polioencephalitis)					
Paralytic	0.07	0.13	0.12	0.11	0.08
Non-paralytic ...	0.06	0.05	0.05	0.06	0.05
Food poisoning	0.02	0.17	0.16	0.14	0.25
DEATHS					
All causes under 1 year of age	32.4	29.8 (a)	33.8	29.4	26.3
Enteritis and diarrhoea under 2 years of age ...	3.60	1.9	2.2	1.6	1.0
NOTIFICATIONS (corrected)					
Puerperal fever and pyrexia	5.82	5.81	7.43	4.33	6.03

(a) Per 1,000 related live births.

Maternal Mortality in England and Wales

International List No. and Cause	Rates per 1,000 Total (Live and Still) Births		Rates per million women aged 15-44 England and Wales
	Bedford	England and Wales	
651 Abortion with sepsis 	—	0.09	7
650, 652 Other Abortion 	—	0.05	4
640, 649, 670-678 Complication of pregnancy and delivery 	—	0.54	
681 Sepsis of childbirth and the puerperium 	—	0.03	
680, 682-689 Other complications of the puer- perium 	—	0.15	

6. Birth Rate

The birth rate for Bedford was 15.5, which was much the same as that of the country as a whole, namely 15.8.

The illegitimate birth rate per 1,000 population for Bedford was 1.1 compared with 0.8 for England and Wales ; while the rate per 1,000 births was 80 and 49 respectively. Though the figures for Bedford per 1,000 population and per 1,000 births (though not for England and Wales) are somewhat higher than in the previous year, 0.8 and 55 respectively, yet it must be remembered here, as elsewhere, that in dealing with small figures chance variations play a considerable part.

For England and Wales the effective reproduction rate has been assessed at 0.98, indicating that the births of 1950 were 2 per cent. below those required to maintain the numbers of the population, when account is taken of its age and sex constitution. To put the matter very briefly, the number of births is not quite enough to ensure that the number of females of reproductive age, upon whom the birth rate depends, will in a generation's time be equal to their number to-day.

7. Still Births

The still birth rate for Bedford was 0.46 per 1,000 population, which is to be compared with 0.37 for England and Wales. The corresponding rate per 1,000 live births was 30.0 and 22.6 respectively. Though the average for Bedford for past years is below that of England and Wales, here again small numbers introduce considerable variations in any one year.

8. Maternal Mortality

There were no maternal deaths of residents in the area.

9. Infant Mortality

The following table shows the infant mortality from various causes stated in accordance with the age of death. Of this total (27), 15 were male infants and 12 female.

The headings of the table are those of the latest annual report of the Ministry of Health.

Cause	Weeks				Total under one month	Months				Total under one year
	0-	1-	2-	3-		1-	3-	6-	9-	
Whooping Cough	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Tuberculous Diseases	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Measles	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Convulsions	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Bronchitis and Pneumonia	-	-	1	-	1	-	2	-	-	3
Enteritis and Diarrhoea	-	-	1	-	1	1	-	-	-	2
Congenital Malformations*	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	-	2
Premature Birth	12	-	-	-	12	-	-	-	-	12
Injury at Birth	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Asphyxia, Atelectasis	1	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	1
Congenital Debility	-	-	-	1	1	-	-	-	-	1
Haemolytic Disease	1	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	1
Other Causes†	2	-	-	-	2	2	1	-	-	5
Total	16	-	2	1	19	3	4	1	-	27

*Congenital Malformations

Case No.	Cause
1	I (a) Status Epilepticus. (b) Congenital malformation (associated with cleft palate and cleft lip)
II	Bronchitis.
2	I (a) Meningitis. (b) Meningo-myelocoele—treated operatively.

† Other Causes

Case No.	Cause
1	Asphyxia. Conviction of Infanticide.
2	Right heart failure due to Paroxysmal Tachycardia.
3	Asphyxia. Conviction of Infanticide.
4	Asphyxia due to pneumothorax following fractured ribs, due to having been accidentally dropped.
5	Catarrhal Laryngeal Spasm.

The number of infant deaths corresponds to an infant mortality rate of 32.4, which may be compared with 29.8, the figure for England and Wales. Naturally, for a town of the relatively small size of Bedford, chance causes considerable variation in the figures from year to year. The average figure for Bedford for past years is well below that for England and Wales.

The number of neo-natal deaths, or those occurring under a month, in Bedford was 19, corresponding to a rate of 22.8 per 1,000 births.

In the case of deaths from premature births the ages were as follows :—

15 hours	...	1	...	0-24 hours	1	} under 7 days, 12
1 day	...	3	...	24-48 hours	3	
2 days	...	6	}	over 2 and under 7 days				8	
3 days	...	2							

II. Social Conditions

No considerable changes in social conditions can be recorded in the year.

As before, the most obvious problem with which the Public Health Department is brought into contact is that of housing, and there are many other problems to which it seems to lead. At present no end is seen to these.

III. Sanitary Circumstances of the Area

With few exceptions all the houses in the Borough are supplied from the public water supply, and in nearly all of these the supply is internal. Again, with few exceptions, all houses are connected to the sewers. I am indebted to the Borough Surveyor for most of the information under the heading Water Supply.

WATER SUPPLY

(a) Quantity and Quality—General

The water supply has been satisfactory in quantity and quality.

(b) Bacteriological and Chemical Analyses

No changes in the source of supply nor in the general methods of treatment were made during the year.

Regular and frequent bacteriological and chemical examinations are made by the Borough Surveyor of the fully treated water and at various points in the course of treatment. Independent samples of raw and fully treated water are also taken, usually once a week, by the Medical Officer of Health and sent to the Ministry of Health Laboratory, Cambridge.

The records of the Borough Surveyor show that of 360 samples of water as supplied none contained *b. coli* in 100 cc., and of the samples sent to the Ministry of Health the total of 49 samples of fully-treated water also showed that this highest standard of bacteriological purity was maintained.

The following tables show the result of chemical analyses of the raw water and of the water as supplied.

BEDFORD CORPORATION WATERWORKS
ANALYSIS OF UNTREATED RIVER WATER, 1950

			Range	Average	Remarks
Reaction (pH)	7.4—8.2	7.9—8.0	
Turbidity (Silica scale)	6—550	24	Peak figures in winter rain.
Colour (Hazen units)	10—180	43	
Carbonate hardness (CaCO ₂)	126—290	218	} Low in periods of heavy rain. Highest figures for rock water.
Non-carbonate hardness (CaCO ₂)	84—175	141	
Total hardness (CaCO ₂)	210—465	359	
Free carbon dioxide	3.8—10	5.0	
Chlorine as chloride	21.0—36.0	29.0	
Nitrate nitrogen (N)	10.01—2.0	3.2	
Nitrite nitrogen (N)	0.01—0.15	0.01	
Ammoniacal nitrogen (N)	0.59—0.01	0.16	Highest in flood conditions.
Albuminoid nitrogen (N)	0.8—0.06	0.3	Highest during algal season.
Oxygen from K ₂ Mn ₂ O ₈ in 3 hrs. at 37°C.			11.0—2.3	3.7	Highest figures from flood and algal water, less than 0.5 for rock water.
Total Solids at 180°C.	513	—	Insufficient data for average.
Biochemical O ₂ demand (5 days at 20°C.)	2.5	—	Insufficient data for average.
Electrical conductivity (megohms per cc at 20°C.)	400—900	641	Highest figures for rock water.
Iron	Trace to 0.2	Less than 0.1	
Copper	Nil	Nil	
Lead	Nil	Nil	
Zinc	Nil	Nil	
Calcium	85—161	132	
Magnesium	4.5—11.0	9.0	
Fluorine	0.04	—	
Sulphates	150	—	
Chromates	Nil	—	
Filtrability index	1.9—0.03	0.46	March, 1951, only.

Results in parts per million.

BEDFORD CORPORATION WATERWORKS
ANALYSIS OF WATER AS SUPPLIED DURING 1950

				Range	Average	Standards
Reaction (pH)	7.5—8.1	7.8	
Turbidity (Silica scale)	Less than 1.0	Less than 1.0	Under 5.0
Colour (Hazen units)	5—13	5.0	Under 20.0
Carbonate hardness CaCO_3	126—260	216	No standard
Non-carbonate hardness (CaCO_3)	106—160	141	No standard
Total hardness (CaCO_3)	232—420	357	No standard
Free carbon dioxide	4.3—10.4	7.0	No standard
Chlorine as chlorides	24—38	30.0	Under 250
Nitrate nitrogen as N	1.4—6.5	2.5	No standard
Nitrite nitrogen as N	Nil	Nil	No standard
Ammoniacal nitrogen as N	Nil to 0.09	0.013	No standard
Albuminoid nitrogen as N	0.06—0.45	0.14	No standard
O_2 from $\text{K}_2\text{Mn}_2\text{O}_8$ in 3 hours at 37°C.	1.0—3.6	1.9	No standard
Total Solids at 180°C.	480	—	Under 1,000
Electric conductivity (Megohms per cc. at 20°C.)	450—820	657	No standard
Iron	Nil—0.05	0.01	Less than 0.3
Copper	Nil—0.05	Nil	Less than 0.2
Lead	Nil	Nil	Less than 0.1
Zinc	Nil	Nil	Less than 5.0
Calcium	107—150	130	No limit
Magnesium	7.0—11.0	9.0	Less than 100
Manganese	Nil	Nil	No standard
Fluorine as F	0.04	0.04	No standard
Silica as Si.	Less than 3.0	—	No standard
Sulphates	70—130	—	Less than 250

Results in parts per million

There are no British standards for chemical content of potable water. Those noted for guidance are American figures, and are not necessarily applicable to a wholesome supply.

(c) Supply to Dwelling Houses

The exceptions to the rule that all houses are supplied from public water mains direct to the house remain as in my last report, namely eight houses supplied by private wells and 28 supplied by standpipes.

IV. Housing

1. STATISTICS

The following table gives the statistics of housing work undertaken during the year under review :—

1. Inspection of Dwelling Houses during the year :

(1) (a)	Total number of dwelling houses inspected for housing defects (under Public Health or Housing Acts)...	475
(b)	Number of inspections, including reinspections, made for the purpose	3,061
(2) (a)	Number of dwelling houses [included under sub-head (1) above] which were inspected and recorded under the Housing Consolidated Regulations, 1925	232
(b)	Number of inspections, including reinspections, made for the purpose	1,696
(3)	Number of dwelling houses found to be in a state so dangerous or injurious to health as to be unfit for human habitation ...	—
(4)	Number of dwelling houses (exclusive of those referred to under the preceding sub-head) found to be not in all respects reasonably fit for habitation	310

2. Remedy of defects during the year without service of Formal Notices :

Number of defective dwelling houses rendered fit in consequence of informal action by the Local Authority or their Officers	327
--	-----

3. Action under Statutory Powers during the year :

(a) Proceedings under Section 9, 10 and 16 of the Housing Act, 1936 :

(1)	Number of dwelling houses in respect of which notices were served requiring repairs	6
(2)	Number of dwelling houses which were rendered fit after service of formal notices :	
(a)	By owners	—
(b)	By Local Authority in default of owners	—

(b) Proceedings under Public Health Acts :

(1)	Number of dwelling houses of which notices were served requiring defects to be remedied	—
(2)	Number of dwelling houses in which defects were remedied after service of formal notices :	
(a)	By owners	—
(b)	By Local Authority in default of owners	—

(c) Proceedings under Sections 11 and 13 of the Housing Act, 1936 :

(1)	Number of dwelling houses in respect of which Demolition Orders were made	—
(2)	Number of dwelling houses demolished in pursuance of Demolition Orders	—

(d)	Proceedings under Section 12 of the Housing Act, 1936 :										
(1)	Number of separate tenements or underground rooms in respect of which Closing Orders were made										
(2)	Number of separate tenements or underground rooms in respect of which Closing Orders were determined, the tenement or room having been rendered fit										
4. Housing Act, 1936—Part IV—Overcrowding :											
(a)	1.	Number of dwellings overcrowded at the end of the year								11	
	2.	Number of families dwelling therein								17	
	3.	Number of persons dwelling therein								*83	
		Adults over 10								60	
		Over 1 year but under 10								19	
		Under 1 year								4	
(b)	Number of new cases of overcrowding reported during the year										17
(c)	1.	Number of cases of overcrowding relieved during the year								18	
	2.	Number of persons concerned in such cases								†142	
		Adults over 10								106	
		Over 1 year but under 10								31	
		Under 1 year								5	
*Equivalent number of Units 69½. †Equivalent number of Units 121½.											
(d)	Particulars of any cases in which dwelling houses have again become overcrowded after the Local Authority have taken steps for the abatement of overcrowding										—
(e)	Any other particulars with respect to overcrowding conditions upon which the Medical Officer of Health may consider it desirable to report (see pages 41 and 46)										

The following comments may be made on the table just given. It is practically impossible at the present time to classify any houses under the heading 1 (3) as absolutely unfit for human habitation for this would involve taking action to secure demolition, an obvious impossibility at the present time apart from quite exceptional circumstances. In many of the houses classified under 1 (4) as not in all respects reasonably fit for human habitation, the defects found are quite trivial or of a nature which can easily be remedied. The number of cases of overcrowding given under heading 4 are probably but a fraction of those which exist, and are often brought to the notice of the department because the persons concerned wish to strengthen their application for a council house on these grounds. It must be remembered that the standard of overcrowding is now based on the number of occupants and the floor space of rooms, and a great deal of distress can be caused when two families have to share a house and the conveniences designed only for a single family, even though these cases come within no legal definition of overcrowding. The difficulty in getting repairs done does not grow less, and often it seems that in housing, as in other matters, present social conditions have brought it to pass that the ease of getting any work done is in inverse proportion to its real utility.

Details of the work summarised in the table just given may be found in the report of the Chief Sanitary Inspector.

2. NEW HOUSES

During the years 1945 to 1950 the following numbers and type of new houses were completed.

New Houses and Conversions—1945 to 1950

	(1) Prefabricated Houses		(2) Permanent Houses	(3) Erected on Licences issued to Builders	(4) Conversions under Licences issued to Builders		(5) Other Adaptations on Licences issued to Builders, Additional units of accommodation	(6) Adaptations of Requisitioned Houses		(7)* Total additional units of accommodation provided
	Temporary	Permanent			(i) Houses into Flats	(ii)		Houses adapted (i)	for Families (ii)	
1945	30	—	—	—	3	7	—	20	63	77
1946	150	—	26	38	7	19	—	17	60	269
1947	—	—	68	22	21	48	—	5	15	127
1948	—	48	146	7	19	45	6	—	—	233
1949	—	74	153	15	8	17	1	—	—	252†
1950	—	28	131	36	11	25	—	—	—	299
Totals	180	150	524	118	69	161	7	42	138	1,167

NOTES.—*The totals in column (7) are obtained by adding the figures in columns (1), (2), (3), (5), as they stand, and in the case of columns (4) and (6) by subtracting figures in column (i) from those in column (ii) to find the number to be included in the total. This last procedure may not always be quite accurate, but gives a sufficient approximation.

†In this year some subtraction must be made from the total as given on account of the fact that four houses, occupied by eleven families, were de-requisitioned, and no doubt failed to accommodate the same number of families, while changes of arrangements in houses still requisitioned resulted in diminution of two in the number of occupying families.

A few observations may be made on the problem of housing after the first and after the second World Wars.

The following table gives available figures relating to the increase of population which are relevant to the problem. Percentage increases are shown in the next table. They give a sufficiently accurate picture in spite of the change of area to which they relate.

3. Population and Families, Bedford Borough

	Persons	Families or separate occupiers	Structurally separate dwellings occupied
Census 1911	39,183	8,893	8,674
Census 1921 :			
Old Borough	40,242	9,530	9,001
New Borough, including areas added 30th June, 1934	41,885	—	—
Census 1931 :			
Old Borough	40,554	10,655	9,876
New Borough, including areas added 30th June, 1934	42,606	11,227	10,431
Estimates 1939 :			
Registrar-General's for population (mid- year)	46,260		
Ratebooks for dwellings (end of year) ...			13,508
Estimates 1950 :			
Registrar-General's for population (mid- year)	53,770		
Ratebooks for dwellings (end of year) ...			15,124

Percentage Increases

	Persons	Families	Structurally separate dwellings
Census 1911-1921 :			
Old Borough	2.7	7.2	3.8
Census 1921-1931 :			
Old Borough	0.8	11.8	9.7
Census 1931 to Estimates 1939 :			
New Borough, including areas added 30th June, 1934	8.6		29.5
Estimates 1939 to Estimates 1950 ...	16.2		12.0
Census 1931 to Estimates 1950	26.2		45.0

The actual increase of population in the same area in any one period is due to natural increase or excess of births over deaths, and also to excess of immigration over emigration. Increase in the number of families during the period covered by the table is due not only to actual increase of population, but also to the fact that family units are becoming smaller on account of the lower birth rate, and the greater length of survival of aged persons occupying separate dwellings after their children have left them.

Up to 1931 the tendency of families to increase at a relatively greater rate than population may be seen from the number of families as given by the

Registrar-General shown in the table. After this date the same tendency may be inferred from the great increase in the number of separate dwellings as obtained from the rate-books. Of course this increase is not an exact measure of increase in the number of families, for up to 1939 (while arrears of housing were being overtaken) increase in the number of dwellings was more than enough to keep pace with increases in the number of families; while after 1939 it has obviously been quite inadequate to this. Over the whole period 1931-1950, however, it is clear that increase in the number of dwellings is some guide to increase in the number of families, but no doubt an underestimate on account of the obvious fact that many more houses are now occupied by more than one family than in 1931. These inferences are not affected by the fact that the figures of increase quoted from the rate books are compiled on a somewhat different basis from those of new buildings and conversions provided by the Borough Surveyor.

From the tables given it appears that after the cessation of building during each of the two wars, there is a much greater increase of population to be rehoused after the second than after the first war, and at the same time the number of families continues to increase at a more rapid relative rate than population. Moreover, there was already at the beginning of the second war some shortage of houses, which was not the case at the beginning of the first war, a fact which naturally tends to make arrears of housing greater after the second than after the first war. Again it appears likely that in the near future, on account of projected developments in the area around Bedford, population may increase by immigration at a greater rate than between the wars. On the ground of numbers alone, therefore, it appears that the present problem of housing is very much greater than the former problem.

The following figures as to the actual rehousing achieved may be given. After the first war in the twenty-one years 1919—1939 the total number of additional units of accommodation provided in the area of the present Borough was 3,992, mainly due to new buildings, and in the year 1939 the number of new houses built reached a peak of 496. The number of houses demolished as unfit for human habitation during this period, namely 178, as well as a few for other reasons, makes little appreciable difference to the total additional accommodation provided. These numbers were not more than enough to cope with the need for new houses, due to the shortage after the first world war and continued increase in population between the wars.

During the six years 1945—1950, the total number of new units of accommodation provided was 1,167, and a not inconsiderable proportion of these was provided by such temporary expedients as requisition and by conversions. It is difficult to form any idea when, if ever, the housing shortage will be overcome with the present rate of progress, and not less difficult to form any idea as to whether this rate of progress can be in fact increased.

No account is here made of new houses required to replace those due to be demolished in accordance with present ideals of housing and new plans of development. In a report prepared in 1943, your Medical Officer of Health gave certain opinions as to housing developments after the war, but he was always careful to state his own doubts as to whether the ideals and standards in accordance with which his figures were given would in fact be capable of achievement. Actual experience after this war has not lessened his own doubts as to whether the ideals in question will be realised in any foreseeable future. With these provisos he gave the number of houses which might be condemned as unfit in the post-war years as 464, if it were possible after the war to raise appreciably the standard of fitness that existed before the war, while if it were possible to raise the standard to a much higher level than appeared to him at all likely a further 1,400 houses might be replaced.

4. HOUSING REQUIREMENTS

I have received the following statement from the Housing Manager as to the number of applicants for houses on the books at the end of the year.

Applications for Houses

The total number of applications for houses on the books of the Corporation at the present time is as follows :—

1. Applicants with families in rooms :

(1) In Bedford	1,207
(b) Out of area, working in Bedford	78
(c) Out of area, not working in Bedford	68

2. Householders with families :

(a) In Bedford	154
(b) Out of area, working in Bedford	75
(c) Out of area, not working in Bedford	59

3. Applicants without children 603

4. Single persons 84

Total	2,328
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The total number of applications show an increase of 66 over those given a year ago. The numbers seem to show that the number of houses provided has not done more than keep pace with increase in the number of families in the post-war years, and has done little or nothing to catch up with the arrears of housing which accumulated during the war years.

V. Inspection and Supervision of Food

1. MILK

(a) Dairies and Distributors

The following table gives the register of dairies and distributors as it stood at the end of the year.

Premises registered as dairies in area	19
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Milk distributors registered in area :

(i) trading from premises within area	17
(ii) trading from premises outside area only	9

Total	26
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Developments in the milk trade are tending to cause the disappearance of the small dairymen and concentration of the milk business in the hands of larger traders.

(b) Milk (Special Designation) (Raw Milk) Regulations, 1949
Milk (Special Designation) (Pasteurised and Sterilised Milk) Regulations, 1949

The following tables show the licences granted under the above-named Orders which came into force on Jnauary 1st, 1950.

RAW MILK					Number of Licences
Tuberculin Tested—Dealers	12*
Supplementary	1
Accredited—Supplementary	1

*Nine of these dealers dealt in Tuberculin Tested (Pasteurised) Milk.

PASTEURISED MILK					Number of Licences
Pasteurised—Dealers	13*
Supplementary	1

*Three of these licences were in respect of establishments in the area at which pasteurising was carried out. Nine of the dealers dealt in Tuberculin Tested (Pasteurised) Milk.

The following table shows the results of laboratory examinations of specially designated raw milk. In explanation of these tables it may be said that the methylene blue test is designed to determine the bacteriological content of milk and the phosphatase test to ascertain whether the milk has in fact been heated to the required standard.

Class of Milk	No. of Samples Tested	Bacteriologist's Reports on Samples submitted for Examination			
Pasteurised	78	Satisfied Methylene Blue and Phosphatase Tests	...	63	
		Satisfied Phosphatase Test but Methylene Blue Test not undertaken; shade temperature over 66 degs.		10	
		Satisfied Phosphatase but failed to satisfy Methylene Blue Test	1
		Not tested owing to late arrival at Laboratory	...	4	
Tuberculin Tested	5	Satisfied Methylene Blue Test	5

It may be said generally that in comparison with a few years ago the samples of pasteurised milk are much more satisfactory and indicate that dairymen and manufacturers of plant have now achieved a considerable measure of success in making and working pasteurising plant satisfactorily.

2. MEAT

The following table shows the number of carcasses inspected and condemned during the year.

The figures for 1949 are also given for comparison. The figures for 1950 show a great increase in comparison with the figures for 1949, and it appears that the conditions in the meat trade in Bedford and its neighbourhood are causing great increases in the number of animals dealt with, especially at certain times of the year.

A table for 1938 is also given, and shows that a much greater amount of meat is dealt with in Bedford slaughter-houses compared with pre-war years, and that a much higher percentage is condemned as unfit. All this means very much additional work for the food inspector, often at irregular hours.

Carcases Inspected and Condemned, 1950

	Cattle (excluding Cows)	Cows	Calves	Sheep and Lambs	Pigs
Number killed and inspected	3,958	1,072	2,563	8,314	895
ALL DISEASES EXCEPT TUBERCULOSIS :					
Whole carcasses condemned	15	20	17	46	19
Carcasses of which some part or organ was condemned..	1,175	533	12	183	127
Percentage of number in- spected affected with dis- ease other than tuberculosis	30.07	51.66	1.13	2.71	15.64
TUBERCULOSIS ONLY :					
Whole carcasses condemned	29	29	1	—	4
Carcasses of which some part or organ was condemned	335	269	—	—	37
Percentage of number inspected affected with tuberculosis	9.20	27.8	0.04	—	4.69

Carcases Inspected, 1949

	Cattle (excluding Cows)	Cows	Calves	Sheep and Lambs	Pigs
Number killed and inspected	2,695	863	2,144	8,942	623

Carcases Inspected and Condemned, 1938

	Cattle (excluding Cows)	Cows	Calves	Sheep and Lambs	Pigs
Number killed	1,040	68	203	4,870	5,160
Number inspected	1,256*	118*	203*	5,390*	6,014*
ALL DISEASES EXCEPT TUBERCULOSIS :					
Whole carcasses condemned	—	1	—	—	10
Carcasses of which some part or organ was condemned..	7	1	—	4	23
Percentage of number in- spected affected with dis- ease other than tuberculosis	0.56	1.69	—	0.07	0.55
TUBERCULOSIS ONLY :					
Whole carcasses condemned	1	1	1	—	7
Carcasses of which some part or organ was condemned...	20	10	—	—	60
Percentage of number inspected affected with tuberculosis	1.68	9.32	0.50	—	1.11

* Includes animals slaughtered elsewhere and systematically inspected in Bedford.

Meat Weight Condemned, 1950

The following table shows the total weight of diseased and unsound home-killed meat condemned in 1950.

Class of Animal	Tuberculosis			Other Diseases			Total lbs.
	Whole Carcase	Part Carcase and Offals	lbs.	Whole Carcase	Part Carcase and Offals	lbs.	
Cattle (excluding Cows) ...	29	335	29,396	15	1,175	25,047	54,443
Cows ...	29	269	29,420	20	533	20,795	50,215
Calves ...	1	—	106	17	12	1,164	1,170
Sheep and Lambs	—	—	—	46	183	3,840	3,840
Pigs ...	4	37	1,686	19	127	3,787	5,473
Totals ...	63	641	60,508	117	2,030	54,633	115,141

3. OTHER FOODS

The following table shows the amount of other foods condemned.

Class of Food	lbs.
Butter ...	6
Cereals ...	28
Cheese ...	30
Cheese Trimmings	33
Chicken ...	3
Condiments ...	4
Confectionery ...	130
Cooked Ham and Bacon	35
Dates ...	2
Dried Fruit ...	731
Eggs ...	12
Eggs (Imported)	70
Fish ...	1,616
Flour ...	33
Ham ...	119
Ice Cream ...	115
Imported Meats ...	822
Liver Sausage ...	15
Margarine ...	6
Meat Pies ...	23
Prepared Meats ...	464
Prunes ...	1,034
Pudding Mixture	100
Rabbits ...	227
Sausages ...	146
Suet ...	49
Sugar ...	38
Sweets ...	42
Synthetic Cream	28
Tapioca ...	152
Tinned Goods—various commodities (5,369 containers)	6,771
Total ...	12,884

4. ICE CREAM

The following table shows the results of testing ice cream in accordance with the agreed bacterial standards. In comparison with the first years of testing there is certainly some improvement, but there remains room for considerable further improvement. Unsatisfactory samples are followed up in order to try to discover where methods of manufacture are unsatisfactory.

	Number of Samples				Percentage in Grades			
	1950	1949	1948	1947	1950	1949	1948	1947
Grade 1	11	31	16	1	17.7	36.0	23.2	3.3
Grade 2	25	22	26	3	40.3	25.6	37.7	10.0
Grade 3	10	7	7	6	16.1	8.1	10.1	20.0
Grade 4	10	21	12	20	16.1	24.4	17.4	66.7
Not accepted— Too old for testing ...	6	5	8	—	9.7	5.8	11.6	—
Totals	62	86	69	30				

5. ADULTERATION OF FOODS

Fifty-five samples of milk and 38 samples of other foods and medicinal preparations were submitted to the Public Analyst.

A summary of samples procured, both of milk, other foods and of medicinal preparations, is shown in the following table.

Table of Samples Taken

Commodity	No. of Samples			No. Genuine			No. Adulterated		
	Form'l	Inf'm'l	Total	Form'l	Inf'm'l	Total	Form'l	Inf'm'l	Total
Arrowroot	—	1	1	—	1	1	—	—	—
Aspirin	—	1	1	—	1	1	—	—	—
Barley Crystals ...	—	1	1	—	1	1	—	—	—
Black Pudding ...	—	1	1	—	1	1	—	—	—
Bun Flour Mixture	—	1	1	—	1	1	—	—	—
Butter	—	4	4	—	4	4	—	—	—
Cooking Fat	—	4	4	—	4	4	—	—	—
Golden Raising Powder	—	1	1	—	1	1	—	—	—
Ground Ginger ...	—	1	1	—	1	1	—	—	—
Ground Nutmeg ...	—	1	1	—	1	1	—	—	—
Ice Cream	—	10	10	—	10	10	—	—	—
Lemon Flavour ...	—	1	1	—	1	1	—	—	—
Liver Sausage ...	—	1	1	—	1	1	—	—	—
Luncheon Sausage ..	—	2	2	—	2	2	—	—	—
Margarine	—	4	4	—	4	4	—	—	—
Meat Pie	—	2	2	—	2	2	—	—	—
Nut-filled Fudge ...	—	1	1	—	1	1	—	—	—
Rum Flavour... ..	—	1	1	—	1	1	—	—	—
Milk	55	—	55	51	—	51	3	—	3
Total	55	38	93	51*	38	89	3	—	3

*One sample of Milk was damaged in transit, and could not be tested.

The following tabular statement shows the nature of samples found adulterated or deficient, and action taken in these cases.

Action Taken on Adulterated Samples

Serial Number of Sample		Commodity	Nature of Adulteration	Remarks as to Action Taken
Formal	Informal			
C48	—	Milk	2% added water	No legal action against retailer. Case investigated, and further samples procured from producer on delivery to retailer which proved satisfactory. Vendor cautioned
C55	—	Milk	8.2% added water 5% deficient in fat	
C74	—	Milk	7.3% deficient in fat	

A number of samples of milk are tested in the Public Health Department by the Gerber Test. This is a simple test quickly carried out, which not only indicates where formal samples may usefully be taken but also in itself gives information on which advice may be given in order to secure improvements of poor milk supplies. The following are the figures for the year.

Gerber Tests

Total number tested	60
Satisfactory	45
Deficient in fat	15

6. SLAUGHTERHOUSES

All the work of slaughtering is concentrated in three slaughterhouses under the Ministry of Food. 981 visits have been made to these premises during the year for the purposes of inspecting the animals slaughtered and of ensuring that the premises are maintained in a satisfactory condition.

7. SLAUGHTER OF ANIMALS ACT, 1933

At the end of December, 1950, there were 40 slaughtermen licensed under this Act.

8. FOOD HYGIENE—CAMPAIGN AND EXHIBITION

In view of the great and increasing importance of food hygiene the Public Health Committee in co-operation with the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries

and the Bedfordshire County Council, decided to hold an exhibition and campaign in the autumn. The importance of the subject is due to the fact that every year food poisoning in the proper sense of the term causes many cases of illness, and some deaths, while other illnesses not specifically designated as food poisoning are liable to be spread by the agency of food and drink.

Food poisoning itself is an increasing danger on account of the very great changes in habits of eating which have taken place in a generation or even a decade. Eating was formerly mainly a family affair, and if the workman had to take his meal away from home, it was often brought by him or taken to him from home; now meals have largely become communal affairs, in restaurants, in factory canteens, in schools, and one carrier of food poisoning germs may infect literally hundreds of persons and not merely a single family. The increasing danger therefore requires increasing safeguards.

The campaign began a fortnight before the exhibition itself with a series of three lectures by recognised experts on the bacteriology of food poisoning and the methods of its prevention. These lectures were addressed to those concerned in dealing with food in a managerial and supervisory capacity. Though invitations were sent to all persons concerned, the attendance was not as good as was hoped, being 26, 60 and 120 respectively for each lecture, but only a small number were members of the catering trades, estimated at 3, 7 and 10, the remaining members being made up of students and, in the case of the last lecture, 50 members of the school meals service.

The Exhibition was opened by His Worship the Mayor on Thursday, 19th October, 1950, at 3 p.m.

During the exhibition week, not only was the exhibition itself held in the Corn Exchange, but additional items were a lecture to housewives in the afternoon by Professor Andrew Topping, Dean of the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, at which again the attendance was disappointing, and a Brains Trust held in the evening. This last item was well attended and seemed to arouse interest. The exhibition contained 40 stands, provided mostly by private firms, and other minor exhibits dealing with various aspects of food hygiene, including bacteriology, means of preventing infection, washing-up methods and detergents. In all, about 11,000 persons attended the exhibition. A very large amount of the time of the department was taken in preparing and working at the exhibition, and all the staff worked well and enthusiastically with the support of the Chairman and members of the Public Health Committee.

The cost of the exhibition, apart from materials supplied by other bodies, may be given in summary form, as follows :—

	£	s.	d.
Total expenditure of Public Health Committee...	766	4	5
Grant from Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries	48	3	6
Grant from County Council	391	0	0
Advertisements in Brochure	166	18	0
Net cost to Public Health Committee	160	2	11

In connection with the same matter, the opportunity has been taken during the year under review and extending into the present year by your Medical Officer of Health in conjunction with the Chief Sanitary Inspector of paying visits to all restaurants, hotel kitchens, factory canteens, and also (though here rather as learners than as critics) with the School Meals Organiser

to all school canteens. At these visits advice has been given on improvements, even where no obligatory powers to enforce advice have existed. The new food bye-laws belong to 1951, not to 1950.

It is not possible to see the result of all this activity in so short a period, but there is good reason to believe that in no very long time, and with the co-operation of all parties concerned, considerable improvements will be made in methods of dealing with food. Improvements have already been made in many directions. Difficulties which are not least occur in those crowded parts in the centre of the town, where changes in social habits have caused a greater increase in the amount of work to be done than can be properly done in the space available.

VI. Prevalence of, and Control over, Infectious and other Diseases

1. INFECTIOUS DISEASES, OTHER THAN TUBERCULOSIS

(a) General Statistics

The following table shows in summary form the number of infectious diseases notified during the year, together with the number of deaths from these diseases.

Diseases (Other than Tuberculosis) notified during the year 1950

	Total cases notified	Total deaths registered
Scarlet fever	147	—
Whooping cough	184	—
Diphtheria	—	—
Measles	676	—
Acute pneumonia	64	19
Meningococcal infection	1	—
Acute poliomyelitis—		
Paralytic	4	1
Non-paralytic	3	—
Acute encephalitis—		
Infective	—	—
Post infectious	—	—
Dysentery	3	—
Ophthalmia neonatorum	2	—
Puerperal pyrexia	5	—
Smallpox	—	—
Paratyphoid fever	—	—
Typhoid fever	1	—
Food poisoning	1	—
Jaundice	102	—
Erysipelas	17	—
Malaria	1	—

The following table gives the number of infectious diseases notified divided into groups of age and sex.

		Scarlet fever		Whooping cough		Acute poliomyelitis		Measles		Diphtheria	
		Paralytic		Non-paralytic		Enteric or Typhoid fever		Paratyphoid fevers		Malaria	
		Infective		Post-infectious		Jaundice		Ophthalmia neonatorum		Puerperal pyrexia	
		Food poisoning		Meningococcal infection		Erysipelas		Under 5 years		5 to 14 years	
		Dysentery		Smallpox		Acute encephalitis		Typhoid fever		Total (all ages)	
		Acute pneumonia		Acute pneumonia		Acute pneumonia		Acute pneumonia		Acute pneumonia	
		Acute pneumonia		Acute pneumonia		Acute pneumonia		Acute pneumonia		Acute pneumonia	
		Acute pneumonia		Acute pneumonia		Acute pneumonia		Acute pneumonia		Acute pneumonia	
		Acute pneumonia		Acute pneumonia		Acute pneumonia		Acute pneumonia		Acute pneumonia	
		Acute pneumonia		Acute pneumonia		Acute pneumonia		Acute pneumonia		Acute pneumonia	
		Acute pneumonia		Acute pneumonia		Acute pneumonia		Acute pneumonia		Acute pneumonia	
		Acute pneumonia		Acute pneumonia		Acute pneumonia		Acute pneumonia		Acute pneumonia	
		Acute pneumonia		Acute pneumonia		Acute pneumonia		Acute pneumonia		Acute pneumonia	
		Acute pneumonia		Acute pneumonia		Acute pneumonia		Acute pneumonia		Acute pneumonia	
		Acute pneumonia		Acute pneumonia		Acute pneumonia		Acute pneumonia		Acute pneumonia	
		Acute pneumonia		Acute pneumonia		Acute pneumonia		Acute pneumonia		Acute pneumonia	
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		Acute pneumonia		Acute pneumonia		Acute pneumonia		Acute pneumonia		Acute pneumonia	
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(b) Individual Diseases

Scarlet Fever. During the year 147 cases occurred, giving a case rate of 2.73 in comparison with 1.50 per thousand for England and Wales. These cases were part of an epidemic which occurred in the winter of 1949-1950 ; they mostly occurred in the first quarter of the year, following 256 cases in the fourth quarter of 1949.

Diphtheria. In consequence of the continued success of the immunisation campaign no case occurred for the third year in succession.

Typhoid Fever. One case of typhoid was notified in a woman aged 50. It was not possible to trace its source.

Measles. 676 cases were notified. For the past few years measles has been epidemic every year, in contrast to its former behaviour when it occurred in epidemic form usually in alternate years. There were no deaths from measles.

Whooping Cough. 184 cases were notified, a number which shows little difference from that of the few preceding years.

Meningitis. One case of meningitis was notified, in a child of one year who recovered.

Acute Poliomyelitis. In all, seven cases were notified, of which particulars, so far as known, are as follows :—

PARALYTIC					
No.	Age	Sex	Date of Onset	Site of Paralysis	Remarks
1.	25	M.	21.7.50	Limbs	Died
2.	6	F.	1.11.50	Left leg	Recovered, with residual paralysis
3.	21	M.	6.11.50	Right arm	Recovered, with residual paralysis
4.	35	M.	16.11.50	Legs	Recovered, with residual paralysis
NON-PARALYTIC					
1.	9	M.	22.8.50		
2.	10	M.	2.11.50		
3.	24	M.	20.11.50		

Jaundice. 102 cases were notified.

Influenza. This disease caused three deaths only during the year.

Food Poisoning. One case was notified. On investigation it was impossible to trace any source of infection from food and perhaps it is doubtful whether the case in fact was one of food poisoning.

Smallpox. No cases or suspicious cases occurred.

The number of new cases discovered in Bedford and treated at the Cleansing Station was eight only, in contrast to 41 in the preceding year and to a figure above 1,000 (in which, however, a proportion of cases from outside areas are included) in the middle years of the war. Scabies seems now almost to have vanished, and to have been due almost entirely to war-time conditions.

(b) Verminous Infestation

The following table shows the action taken in connection with the treatment of verminous heads.

NUMBER OF PERSONS WITH VERMINOUS HEADS EXAMINED AND TREATED AT THE CLEANSING STATION DURING 1949 AND 1950

	New Cases				Treatments				Examinations			
	Bedford		County		Bedford		County		Bedford		County	
	1950	1949	1950	1949	1950	1949	1950	1949	1950	1949	1950	1949
Pre-School Children	7	6	—	1	7	11	—	1	10	7	—	2
School Children	90	113	18	9	265	386	37	28	145	173	30	16
Adults	7	6	1	6	16	17	1	8	15	11	2	9
Totals	104	125	19	16	288	414	38	37	170	191	32	27

In accordance with the policy of previous years, children attending school are treated by arrangement with the Local Education Authority.

VII. Conclusion

For surely (said he) a bastard nursed in a bureau
must love and reverence all women for its mothers ;
and likewise every woman, being in like default,
would love all babies as her only son.
.
.
. and our sophists, who lack
claim to any shred of great Plato's glorious mantle
of wisdom, have secured a good lien on his bluff.*

ROBERT BRIDGES, *Testament of Beauty*.

Though many duties for which the medical officer of health of a municipal borough council was formerly responsible have passed to other authorities, yet he is still expected to report on statistics ; and, especially if he is at the same time an officer serving authorities dealing with personal and individual health, he may find it difficult to avoid commenting, in connection with these statistics, not only on matters for which he is himself directly responsible as medical officer of an authority dealing with environmental health, but also on matters which are the province of those authorities dealing with personal health.

*Plato

It is customary to look upon the statistics given in such a report as this as proving an advance in national health ; and, if attention is directed solely to the low general death rate, to a decrease in the infant mortality rate and to a fall in the death rate for most diseases, this might appear to be true ; yet to the writer it seems that the statistics and the facts relating to life overshadow in importance those relating to death and disease, and that the most important fact of all is that the number of births now occurring is less than enough to maintain the numbers of the population ; for without adequate reproduction a race and a civilisation are doomed to final and inevitable decay.

Connected partly as cause and partly as effect with the falling birth rate is the changing position of women and the encouragement given in policies and practices approved by "our sophists" for them either to have no children at all or to turn over, from a tender age, the children of their strictly limited families to the care of others in day nurseries, in nursery classes, and in schools, in order that they themselves may undertake work outside the home ; and this work not infrequently takes the form of looking after other women's children as teachers, as doctors, as nurses, or even in the preparation of school meals ; whereby we, including the poet quoted, see some approach, though with differences, to Plato's ideal State. What result these policies will have may not fully appear till the next generation or so, but already it seems that part of their effect is apparent in the increased demand for child guidance and psychiatric treatment. Philosophers are not always the best guides to life and living, and pseudo-philosophers or sophists still less so ; though how to escape their influence is another matter.



BOROUGH OF BEDFORD

REPORT

OF THE

Chief Sanitary Inspector

For the Year 1950

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PUBLIC HEALTH DEPARTMENT,
TOWN HALL,
BEDFORD.

August, 1951.

*To His Worship the Mayor, Aldermen and Councillors
of the Borough of Bedford.*

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

I have the honour to present my Annual Report on the work performed by the Sanitary Inspectors during the year 1950, and this report shows that the staff is endeavouring to maintain hygienic conditions and good sanitation throughout the town.

Owing to a vacancy which was not filled until 1st April, 1950, it was not found possible to maintain the level of inspection, particularly in connection with housing.

The chief event of the year was the Clean Food Exhibition held in October, the organisation of which took up a considerable amount of time and energy. Nevertheless, the success of the Exhibition was well worth the effort.

One activity of the Department which is of considerable importance is meat inspection, and many hours outside normal office time (including some Sundays) have been devoted to the work by the Meat Inspectors.

For some eight months the senior drain tester and disinfecter was absent from duty on account of an occupational disease, but I am pleased to report that in November last he was able to resume his duties.

Once again I take this opportunity of expressing my appreciation of the co-operation of the Public Health Committee in the work undertaken and to the assistance received from the Chief Officers and their staffs.

I also express my sincere thanks to the Medical Officer of Health for his help and guidance, and to the Sanitary Inspectors and staff for their valuable assistance and loyal support.

I am,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Your obedient Servant,

F. C. HAYNES,

Chief Sanitary Inspector.

Annual Report of The Chief Sanitary Inspector

F. C. HAYNES, Cert.R.San.I., M.S.I.A.

1. Sanitary Inspection of the Area

The following report shows the general and detailed nature of the duties carried out by the Sanitary Inspectors of the Department during the year 1950.

This report includes particulars with regard to sanitary inspections of the area ; in conjunction with details with regard to matters referred to in the report of the Medical Officer of Health relating to Housing (Section IV), and Inspection and Supervision of Food (Section V).

1. SUMMARY OF GENERAL INSPECTIONS AND ADMINISTRATIVE DUTIES

Housing

Houses inspected under the Housing Act, 1936	232
Houses requiring repairs	181
Houses totally unfit for human habitation	—
Houses repaired	226
Premises inspected under the Public Health Act, 1936	243	
Premises where nuisances discovered	129
Premises where nuisances abated	103
Revisits to houses under Housing and Public Health Acts	2,586	

Overcrowding

Visits	18
Houses found to be overcrowded	17

Infectious Diseases

Visits	524
--------	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----

Verminous and Other Conditions

Visits to verminous premises	27
------------------------------	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	----

Drainage

House drains tested on payment of fee	3
Defects found	3
Drains tested or inspected on complaint	374
Defects found	258
Revisits for inspection during repairs or reconstruction	332
Retests to drains	31

Visits to

Houses Let in Lodgings	86
Common Lodging Houses	21
Moveable Dwellings, Caravans, etc.	116
Public Houses	163
Hotels	67
Restaurants	270
Fish Frying Premises	28
Slaughterhouses	981
Cowsheds, Dairies and Milkshops	270
Other Shops and Premises where Food is prepared, stored or exposed for sale	2,413
Bakehouses	217
Places of Entertainment	57
Factories with mechanical power	283
Factories without mechanical power	75
Workshops	40
Outworkers' premises	2
Offices	27
Shops under Section 58, Shops Act, 1950	484
Premises where animals are kept	12
Offensive trades premises	21
Sundry nuisances	166
Miscellaneous visits	1,090

Food and Drugs sampling

Samples submitted to the Public Analyst	93
Samples of graded milk submitted for examination			83
Samples of ice cream submitted for examination		62
Informal samples procured and examined at the Public Health Department	60

Rats and Mice Destruction

Visits made to premises by Sanitary Inspectors	12
Inspections of premises by Rodent Operator	487
Visits for treatment	940

Rent Restriction Acts

Complaints in connection with excessive rents	7
Investigations and interviews	366

General Administration

Informal Notices served :—

Housing Act...	181
Public Health Acts	129
Shops Acts	11
Factories Acts	28
Food and Drugs Acts	201
Various Byelaws, Orders and Regulations	1

Total number of informal notices served 551

It was found necessary to serve six statutory notices during the year.

2. TABLE SHOWING DETAILED NATURE OF WORK CARRIED OUT AS A RESULT OF INSPECTIONS

(a) Dwelling Houses

General Improvements

Defective roofs repaired or renewed	171
Eavesgutters and downspouts repaired or renewed	140
Damp walls remedied	48
Defective walls, brickwork and pointing made sound	197
Rooms cleansed and redecorated	540
Defective floors repaired or renewed	102
Defective windows repaired or renewed	334
Defective doors repaired or renewed	53
Defective firegrates repaired or renewed	82
Defective stair treads repaired or renewed	21
Handrails provided to stairs	36
Rooms provided with permanent means of ventilation	41
Defective coppers repaired or renewed	30
Defective food cupboards made sound	2
Glazed sinks provided in lieu of defective sinks	5
Sinks and waste pipes repaired or renewed	42
Defective service pipes repaired	3

Water Closets

Defective W.C.s repaired or rebuilt	4
New W.C.s built	4
W.C.s separated from barns	31
Pedestal pans provided in lieu of defective pans	43
W.C. fittings repaired or renewed	155

Outhouses

Outhouses repaired or rebuilt	3
Outhouses demolished	1
Spoutings repaired or renewed	50
Outhouses cleansed	1
Floors repaired or renewed	3
Doors provided	3

Drainage

Drains repaired or partially reconstructed	99
Drains wholly relaid	4
Inspection chambers constructed or repaired	31
Soil and vent pipes repaired	7
Blocked drains cleared	157

Yards

Houses at which yard paving was repaired or renewed	29
Nuisances arising from keeping of animals	3
Sanitary dustbins provided	36

Infectious and other Diseases

Rooms disinfected	172
Articles of bedding, clothing, etc., disinfected	16,910

Disinfestation

Rooms disinfested	394
Articles of bedding, clothing, etc., disinfested	3,010
Articles destroyed	136

(b) Other Housing Accommodation**Houses Let in Lodgings**

Floors repaired	3
Defective sinks replaced with glazed sinks	2
Rooms and staircases and passages cleansed and redecorated	12
Other improvements carried out	9

Common Lodging Houses

Limewashing and general cleansing carried out	3
---	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	---

(c) Food Premises**Public Houses and Hotels**

Additional W.C.s or urinals provided	13
Washbasins provided	4
Sinks provided in bar	2
Waste pipes provided to sinks in bar	3
Hot water supply provided over sink in bar	27
Rooms cleansed and redecorated	25
Other improvements carried out	3

Food Preparing Rooms

General cleansing and redecoration carried out	147
Washbasins provided	3
Sinks provided	21
W.C. compartments cleansed	4
W.C. pedestal pans fixed	3
Sanitary dustbins provided	1
Hot water supply provided	209
Other improvements carried out	79

Cowsheds and Dairies

Dairies at which improvements carried out	7
Dairies and cowsheds where limewashing and general cleansing carried out	9
Washing facilities provided, together with hot water supply	9

Slaughterhouses

Regular periodic limewashing and general cleansing carried out	3
Other improvements carried out	3

(d) Other Premises**Offices**

Rooms cleansed and redecorated	7
W.C.s repaired or renewed	6
Other improvements carried out	9

Factories (including Bakehouses)

Defective floors remedied	4
Defective lighting or ventilation remedied	7
Sanitary accommodation requirements complied with :								
(a) Provided	1
(b) Repaired	18
Regular periodic limewashing and general cleansing carried out	...							2

Smoke Abatement

Structural improvements	1
-------------------------	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	---

Shops

W.C.s provided	3
W.C. compartments repaired or rebuilt	1
Hot water provided over washbasins	11
Shops or stores cleansed and redecorated	17
Means of heating provided	3
Other improvements carried out	29

II. Sanitary Circumstances of the Area

1. HOUSING

(a) Inspections

(i) Housing Act, 1936

The number of houses inspected and recorded under the Housing Consolidated Regulations was 232, of which 51 were found to be in order.

Informal notices were served upon the owners of the 181 houses found to be not, in all respects, reasonably fit for human habitation. Of these, 56 were complied with by the end of the year and orders for the works to be carried out have been given in the majority still outstanding. In addition, 168 notices served in previous years were also complied with during the year.

In six instances the owners failed to comply with the informal notices, and on the instructions of the Public Health Committee statutory notices were served in December.

Orders were subsequently given by the owners to carry out the works.

Demolition orders were served on the owners of 14 houses just prior to the last war, but the houses are still occupied under licence granted by the Ministry of Health. In view, however, of the worsening condition of eleven of these houses, the Committee have decided not to recommend renewal of the licences in these cases after November, 1951.

(ii) Public Health Act, 1936

Under the above-named Act, 243 inspections were made, and minor defects and/or nuisances were discovered at 129 premises. Informal notices were served, and in 103 instances the works specified were carried out. The remaining notices should be complied with during the current year.

(iii) Observations

Supervision of all works specified, under both the Housing and Public Health Acts, necessitated 2,586 visits being made.

Delay in the works of repair still exists due to the shortage and demand on building materials, and to the difficulty of obtaining skilled labour, such labour being engaged on the more important work of erection of new houses.

In a number of instances my attention has been drawn by owners to the continual rise in the cost of repairs and the effect it has on income from low-rented property.

(b) General**(i) Overcrowding**

The following table shows the position with regard to overcrowding as at 31st December, 1950.

Overcrowding cases outstanding at 31st December, 1949	...	12
New cases discovered during 1950	17
Total	29
Number of cases abated during 1950	18
Number of cases outstanding at 31st December, 1950	...	11

Overcrowding discovered in 1950 was caused as follows :—

Taking in sub-tenants	10
-----------------------	--------	----

By the tenant and family exceeding the permitted number of persons allowed to occupy the house	7
--	--------	---

During the year 38 applications were received from landlords and agents to supply the permitted number of persons who may occupy individual houses.

(ii) Purchase of Property

The Authority have purchased 95 houses during the past few years in proposed redevelopment areas and these are still occupied, the management of these being under the control of the Housing Manager.

At most of the public auctions I attended, purchase of such property was not made on behalf of the Authority owing to the high prices ruling. For information, I may say that I noticed, in a number of instances, the tenants purchased their own houses.

(iii) Estimated number of Houses

Estimated number of private houses in the Borough	13,030
Houses owned by Corporation on Estates	1,961
Houses owned by Corporation in various other parts of the Borough	...	133
Total	15,124

(iv) Housing—Amenities**(a) BATHS**

During the year plans for the installation of baths were submitted to the Borough Surveyor's Department in 20 instances, there now being an estimated 3,280 houses in the Borough without baths.

(b) CLOSET ACCOMMODATION

Apart from 38 houses situated in remote parts of the Borough which have pail closets, there are some 14 houses (12 almshouses in St. Loyes Street and St. John's Place and two cottages at Goldington) which share seven W.C.s. Otherwise all houses in the Borough have separate W.C. accommodation, together with flushing cisterns.

It is estimated that there are some 490 houses, including 45 almshouses, at which the water closets are situated at the end of the gardens.

(c) HOUSES WITHOUT SECONDARY MEANS OF ACCESS

It is estimated that some 98 houses are without secondary means of access, that is, the front door has to be used to gain access to the backyard, but the majority of these are scheduled for demolition.

2. DRAINAGE AND SEWERAGE**(a) Drainage**

The following table is a summary of the houses and other premises at which drains were tested and inspected and repair work carried out.

Type of Premises	No. tested	No. inspected	No. where defects found	No. wholly relaid	No. repaired
(i) Private Houses :					
(a) On payment of fee ...	3	—	3	—	2
(b) On complaint, etc. ...	9	331	231	2	229
(ii) Other Premises ...	9	25	27	2	25
Totals ...	21	356	261	4	256

For the purpose of supervising repairs and reconstruction of drainage, there were 332 visits of inspection and 31 retests.

As can be seen from the table, there has been no demand for the testing and reporting upon house drains on payment of fee, this being due to the fact that purchasers are only too pleased to obtain possession of houses without advantage of the facilities offered by the Authority for drain testing.

(b) Sewerage

All premises in the borough have drainage connected to the public sewers with the exception of 54 houses and six small factories, details of which were given in the 1949 report.

3. REFUSE**(a) Storage**

The provision of new dustbins was made at 36 houses after the service of informal notices upon the owners in conformity with the resolution of the Public Health Committee made in 1946, and in no case was it necessary to serve formal notice.

For some time past difficulty has been experienced in obtaining the provision of sanitary dustbins, and in February I received a letter from a firm of local house agents stating that in accordance with instructions they were not intending to provide dustbins in the future to properties managed by them. This action was based on a number of legal decisions elsewhere implying that the responsibility for such provision rested with the occupier.

The matter of the provision of dustbins by the Local Authority has been considered by appropriate Committees with a recommendation that the Corporation undertake this for house refuse and that the cost be charged on the rates. This recommendation has not been implemented as further enquiries are being made concerning the probable cost of adopting the scheme.

(b) Collection and Disposal

Collection of refuse is under the control of the Borough Engineer and Surveyor, and modern type vehicles are used.

His department also controls the disposal of all refuse, which is disposed of by controlled tipping at disused gravel pits at Willington.

4. INSPECTION OF PREMISES (OTHER THAN HOUSES) PUBLIC HEALTH ACT, 1936

(a) Offices

Inspections were made to 27 office premises during the year, and apart from 11 contraventions all were found in order.

A number of offices in the Corporation Departments were modernised and redecorated during the year under review.

It may be added that office accommodation in the town can generally be regarded as satisfactory.

(b) Public Houses**(i) SANITARY ACCOMMODATION**

Referring to the 1948 report (whereby all sanitary accommodation is required to be situated in the building) at the end of the year the sanitary accommodation at public houses was as follows :—

1. Now satisfactory	26
2. Works in progress	4
3. Orders given but work not yet commenced	5
4. Plans approved, but building licences not granted	6
5. Plans in course of preparation	11
6. No action yet taken	45
Total	<hr/> 97 <hr/>

In view of the fact that in several instances the agreed structural alterations involve large sums of money (estimated at £2,000 to £3,000 per house) difficulty has been experienced in obtaining the necessary building licences from the regional offices of the Ministry of Works.

With regard to the 56 houses at which works of alterations have not been commenced, I regret to say that there will be some considerable delay before work is started owing to building difficulties, although the owners are prepared to proceed as soon as possible.

(ii) CLEANSING OF GLASSES, ETC.

A further 27 hot water supplies were made available over the bar sinks at public houses making a total of 83 houses now provided with this facility. There are now only 14 premises at which there are no hot water supplies but orders have been placed for this apparatus and it is expected that this will be fixed early in 1951.

(iii) **GENERAL**

Some considerable amount of time has been expended in visiting these premises with architects regarding the proposed alterations prior to submitting plans to the Licencing Justices and the local and town planning authorities for approval.

(c) Hotels and Boarding Houses

Inspections were made to the 12 hotels in the borough, all of which were being maintained in a satisfactory condition.

Improvements have been carried out at four hotels as under :—

Additional bedrooms provided in two cases.

Kitchen improvements effected at three premises.

Visits were also paid to a number of boarding houses in the town and these were found to be maintained in a satisfactory condition.

(d) Cinemas, Theatre, Dance Halls, etc.

Periodic visits were paid to the four cinemas, and these were found to be maintained in a satisfactory condition, and a report on the sanitary condition was submitted to the licensing authority (the Bedfordshire County Council).

Visits were also made to the theatre and inspections made of the dressing rooms, bandroom, auditorium, and sanitary accommodation. The premises were found to be maintained in a satisfactory condition.

Inspection was also made of the various public halls used for dancing and other social functions, and generally these premises were found to be satisfactory.

(e) Offensive Trades

There is only one offensive trade carried on in the borough, namely, dealers in rags and bones, and 21 visits were made to the three establishments concerned. The premises were found to be in a satisfactory condition.

In addition, the Corporation maintain a salvage department at the Newnham Depot, under the supervision of the Borough Engineer and Surveyor.

(f) Rivers, Streams and Ponds

There have been no complaints of pollution of the river, streams or ponds in the town, apart from dumping of rubbish and worn-out household articles in a portion of the King's Ditch in the Pilcroft Street area, and to slop water from a block of neighbouring houses gaining access to a pond at Goldington (near Swan Terrace).

On inspection it was found necessary to undertake spraying with an effective insecticide of the ponds and ditches at Goldington Green, and at the pond at the rear of St. John's Day Nursery due to infestation by mosquitoes.

(g) Places where Animals are kept

Following upon complaints, 12 inspections were made of places where animals are kept, and in 10 instances it was necessary to take informal action to abate nuisances.

(h) Smoke Abatement

In Bedford there are 35 chimneys in connection with factories and hospitals, but six of these are infrequently used.

Following upon complaints of smoke nuisances in various parts of the borough during the latter part of the year, 36 observations were made on chimneys at such premises, and in four cases only was "black" smoke observed to be in excess of the permitted two minutes in every half hour. The excessive emission occurred at one factory only.

The firm concerned had their attention drawn to these nuisances, and they immediately sought the advice of the Ministry of Fuel and Power. Technical experts from the Eastern Region visited the firm's boiler plant and gave advice, and subsequent observations showed a marked improvement.

(i) Public Conveniences

The Borough Surveyor's Department controls the public conveniences in the town, parks and recreation grounds. It has not been practicable to put into operation the scheme for additional and improvement of existing conveniences prepared by the Borough Surveyor.

5. FOOD AND DRUGS ACT, 1938

(1) Food Preparing Rooms

(a) RESTAURANTS AND CANTEENS

There are 38 restaurants in the town and 24 works canteens, apart from school and office canteens. During the year, inspections were made to many of the premises and the following works of improvement and cleansing were undertaken.

Cleansing of food preparing rooms	32
Provision of hot water	19
Structural alterations	7
Other improvements	15

(b) BAKEHOUSES

In regular use are 33 bakehouses, one being closed during the year. These premises were generally maintained in a satisfactory condition, but at six the occupiers were called upon to cleanse and redecorate, and at four others improvements were carried out.

(c) ICE CREAM

At the end of the year there were seven manufacturers and 120 retailers of this commodity.

One manufacturer transferred his business to more commodious premises during the year, where works of structural improvements were carried out and additional modern plant was installed.

All premises where ice-cream is manufactured or sold were generally maintained in a satisfactory condition. Some new modern type vehicles were also brought into use during the year, these replacing older types which had been adapted to meet modern requirements.

(d) SAUSAGES AND PRESERVED FOODS

Inspections were made of the premises where sausages and preserved foods intended for sale are manufactured, and only in nine instances was it necessary to direct attention to cleansing and redecoration, which was duly carried out.

(e) FISH FRYING

Twenty-eight visits were made to fish-frying premises and to the three premises where mobile fish-frying vans are stored, and all were found to be kept in a satisfactory condition.

All premises have gas-fired ranges.

(f) SLAUGHTERHOUSES

The three slaughterhouses used by the Ministry of Food were maintained in a satisfactory condition.

(g) OTHER PREMISES

During the year a disused ice-cream factory was converted to the manufacture of potato crisps. Towards the end of the year, however, the business closed down.

(h) SHOPS, STALLS AND VEHICLES

In order to ensure that food is prepared, stored and sold under hygienic conditions, 2,413 visits were made to shops, stalls and vehicles.

(i) *Shops (Food)*

The campaign to ensure that all food shops complied with modern requirements was continued, and 453 shops were inspected in this connection. The following table shows the work undertaken as the result of these inspections.

Type of Premises	No. of Premises	Cleansed	Hot Water Provided	Sinks	General Repairs
Confectionery	98	4	36	—	4
Fish—Wet	12	1	4	2	2
Fried	17	2	3	—	1
Fruit—Retail	40	12	18	1	3
Wholesale	2	—	1	—	—
Grocery—Retail	179	77	80	4	24
Wholesale	6	3	5	—	—
Meat—Retail	49	14	19	3	13
Wholesale	1	—	1	—	—
Bakehouses	33	7	10	2	4
Dairies	16	9	9	9	7
Total	453	129	186	21	58

The opportunity was also taken of stressing, to all food handlers, the importance of cleanliness.

(ii) *Stalls*

The 36 food stalls in the Market Square were regularly inspected and it was found, that generally (this being an open-air market), stallholders endeavoured to protect the foodstuffs from contamination.

(iii) *Vehicles*

Food vehicles operating in the Borough were inspected and it is pleasing to note that there are very few open vehicles in use.

(2) **Byelaws**

The model byelaws, drawn up by the Ministry of Food under the Food and Drugs Act, relating to the Handling, Wrapping and Delivery of Food, and Sale of Food in the open-air, have not yet been adopted as the Authority have taken up with the Ministry the matter of inserting additional clauses relating to wearing of suitable washable outer clothing by food handlers and prohibiting smoking by such persons.

(3) **Clean Food Campaign**

The Public Health Committee, in conjunction with the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries and the Bedfordshire County Council, organised a Clean Food Exhibition, which was held at the Corn Exchange from Thursday, 19th, to Wednesday, 25th October, 1950.

The members of the Public Health Committee, the Medical Officer of Health and all the members of the Public Health Department devoted a considerable amount of time prior to the Exhibition in planning, organising and making of exhibits. The Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries provided shell stands and a small cinema.

To the Sanitary Inspectors was allocated that portion of the Exhibition emphasising clean and dirty kitchens, dirty shop and Public Health Department stand, as well as other similar items. It is interesting to record that in making the above-mentioned stands, a large part of the material used was secondhand, and a considerable amount of manual work was involved in re-using it for these purposes.

With the help of the clerical staff the Inspectors managed to devote one or two hours per day, outside their normal duties, to the work of erection of stands, and preparation of exhibits. Apart from the stands themselves, equipment was also made by the staff.

Valuable assistance was also rendered to the Public Health Department by many local traders who kindly gave or loaned fittings for use on the stands.

Details of stands were as follows :—

(1) *Clean Kitchen*.—This stressed the importance of cleanliness in the kitchen and showed simple inexpensive modern equipment.

(2) *Dirty Kitchen*. This stand attracted a great deal of attention. The furniture was dirty and had been badly used. The sink was black and greasy, and the kitchen utensils were far from clean. It may be said that this kitchen did in fact represent very well such places in bad houses.

(3) *Public Health Stand*. This stand proved a great attraction, mainly in the testing of milk by the gerber test which was undertaken by the staff several times a day. In addition there were specimens of condemned meat (this being changed daily) and other unsound foods. The work of disinfection, disinfestation and rodent destruction were also emphasised. Another attraction was a large model of the house fly loaned by the British Museum.

Supervision was also devoted to the layout of the other stands and the cinema.

An attractive brochure was prepared, 10,000 copies being printed. It may be interesting to note here that the cost of the brochure was covered by the advertisements obtained.

During the period of the Exhibition the whole of the staff, together with staff of other departments and of the Bedfordshire County Council, were engaged on rota duties, this system enabling the other work of the Department to be maintained as far as possible.

The attendance figure was over 11,000, and members and officials from other authorities visited in order to obtain information and ideas for similar exhibitions in their areas.

This Exhibition brought to the notice of the public (including school children) the importance of cleanliness in the handling of all foods, and utensils, etc. The work of the Department was also stressed as well as modern methods of storage, wrapping and handling of foods. The venture has proved to be worth while, as in a number of instances managements of several establishments have been very willing to carry out works of improvement.

A number of photographs were taken of various parts of the exhibition as well as photographs of inspectors at work on normal duties. These are being kept by the Department as a permanent record.

(4) **Unsound Food**

One complaint was received during the year relating to a portion of bread (purchased from a shop) in which a roofing nail was embedded. This was duly

investigated, and the proprietor of the shop concerned and the complainant were interviewed. The matter was considered by the Public Health Committee, who authorised a warning letter to be sent.

In two instances complaints of broken glass in filled milk bottles were received and the dairy concerned was duly cautioned.

III. Milk and Dairies Regulations, 1949

There are now 17 dairies in the borough, four having ceased business since my previous report.

Inspections have been made during the year, and the premises were found to be maintained in a satisfactory condition.

IV. Shops Act, 1950—Section 38

The above-named Act which came into force on the 1st October consolidates the Acts of 1912 to 1938 and certain enactments relating to shops. Provisions relating to health and comfort of shop workers have not been altered.

In order to ensure that the provisions of the above-named section were being observed, 484 visits have been made and in only 16 instances were contraventions discovered, and following upon informal action these were remedied.

V. Building Plans

All plans for buildings submitted to the Borough Surveyor are examined by me and any amendments necessary are made before submission to the Town Planning Committee for its approval.

Such co-operation between the two Departments ensures that the plans do, in all respects, comply with the requirements of statute.

VI. Premises and Occupations which can be Controlled by Byelaws and Regulations

1. HOUSES LET IN LODGINGS

A number of large houses of the older type situated between Midland Road and Clapham Road continue to be occupied as "Houses let in Lodgings," *i.e.*, where there are two or more families renting and occupying rooms which are not self-contained flats. One does not look upon this type of dwelling as ideal, especially where there are a number of families with young children occupying the upper floors and also sharing a common garden.

Generally these premises are found to be maintained in a fair condition, but at four minor contraventions were discovered.

2. COMMON LODGING HOUSES

The three registered Common Lodging Houses in the borough have been regularly inspected and found to be maintained in reasonable condition.

The following table shows the available accommodation at these premises, together with the number of lodgers admitted. Only males are catered for.

Situation				No. of Bedrooms		No. of Beds	No. of Lodgers Admitted
8a Tavistock Place	6	...	40	...	13,009
4 All Hallows Lane	4	...	19	...	5,331
22 All Hallows Lane	2	...	16	...	4,541
				—	—	—	—
				12	75		22,887
				—	—		—

Accommodation of this type is still in general demand, mainly due to workers engaged on various public works in and around the borough.

3. MOVEABLE DWELLINGS

(a) Caravans at Fairground

The caravans used by the showmen attending the Statute Fairs in Commercial Road were inspected and found to be kept in their usual very clean condition. No cases of illness were discovered. In addition to the chemical closets provided by the caravan owners, the Corporation provided temporary sanitary accommodation.

(b) Other Sites

During the year the occupiers of eight caravans were granted licences to station their vehicles at the following sites.

Site				No. of Caravans
Clarence Yard, St. John's Street	4
Paddock at 1 Goldington Green	4
				—
Total	8
				—

The caravans were inspected and found to be in order. The occupants have facilities of sanitary accommodation and water supply provided at nearby houses.

So far this Authority has adopted the policy of licensing of caravans only, and not the sites. From time to time I receive applications from persons wishing to station caravans in the Borough, but have to draw attention to the fact that there are no licensed sites, and provision of such sites may have to be considered by the Authority, especially as persons who are unable to obtain housing accommodation are more and more required to resort to living in caravans. The nearest caravan site to Bedford (known to this Department) is at Clapham, and this, I understand, is fully occupied.

VII. Rats and Mice

The following table shows the work undertaken during the year.

Type of Premises	No. of Inspections	State of Infestation						Free of Vermin	Treatment		Estimated Vermin destroyed		Contracts entered into
		Heavy 50-100		Med'm 12-50		Small 1-12			Visits for treatment	Pre-mises treated			
		R	M	R	M	R	M				Rats	Mice	
Business ...	64	5	—	2	23	11	23	—	152	64	200	438	26
Private ...	407	—	1	21	34	245	96	10	755	397	681	336	—
Corporation...	16	2	—	4	—	8	2	—	33	16	73	9	—
	487	7	1	27	57	264	121	10	940	477	954	783	26

R=Rats

M=Mice

NOTE.—The number of rodents destroyed is estimated at three per ounce of poison buit partaken. This basis may be on the low side.

All complaints were duly investigated and in addition the work of routine survey was also continued, but it was not possible to undertake surveying on a large scale owing to the fact that for a period of eight months one of the men engaged on disinfection was absent through illness and the rodent operator was required to undertake part-time disinfection duties during this period, the Authority not deeming it necessary to engage temporary help.

Infestation at some food premises in the town centre still exists, but as the occupiers have engaged the services of a pest control company it is being controlled. As can be seen from the table, the greater part of the infestation was slight.

No charge is made for work undertaken at private dwellings or Corporation property, but at business premises a charge of 4/- per hour is made.

Twenty-six contracts were undertaken, and a sum of £27 14s. 0d. was received for this work.

Great importance is attached to the work of eradication of rats and mice, and although the service is far from self-supporting from a financial point of view, the work undertaken was more than compensated for by the prevention of damage to foodstuffs and property and the avoidance of spreading disease.

Many of the causes of small infestation are due to the keeping of poultry, rabbits, etc., in back gardens of dwelling houses.

The work of eradication of rats in the public sewers continues to be undertaken by the Surveyor's Department, and this has no doubt assisted in the prevention of heavy infestation, particularly in the central areas.

VIII. National Assistance Act, 1948

1. SECTION 50—BURIAL OR CREMATION OF THE DEAD

During the year four persons were buried by the Authority under this Act as no other suitable arrangements were made by relatives or friends.

Three of these burials were of bodies receovered from the River Ouse, and one of a person who died at hospital (it being understood that assets were available).

In three cases no assets were left, but in the remaining case the cost of the funeral was recovered from the husband's estate.

The total cost of the burials was £41 9s. 0d.

2. SECTION 47—CARE AND ATTENTION OF AGED PERSONS

Six cases were brought to the notice of this Department of elderly persons needing care and attention, and these were duly investigated.

In three instances the persons were living alone, one lived with her son, and two were living in lodgings. Five were found to be living in insanitary conditions and one in a fair condition, this person receiving attention from friends. Four aged persons were voluntarily removed to hospital, one was removed to hospital following upon an accident (she subsequently died), while the remaining case (mother living with son—a mental health case) continues to live at home, receiving care from the Home-Help Service.

So far it has not been found necessary to resort to legal action to enforce removal, but these cases take up a considerable amount of time in making investigations and ensuring that they receive adequate care.

In all cases the insanitary conditions were remedied by the destruction of all filthy and verminous articles, and in one instance by the destruction of six cats.

IX. Rent Restriction Acts, 1920-1939

1. UNFURNISHED ACCOMMODATION

No complaints were received during the year relating to unfurnished rooms or houses.

2. FURNISHED ACCOMMODATION

The local authority was notified that investigations had been made by the Rent Tribunal into 19 cases, and that rent reduction had been made in 10 of these. The existing rents were approved in the remainder.

3. GENERAL

During the year 366 interviews were held with landlords, tenants and sub-tenants, in connection with the provisions of the above-named Acts, mainly relating to notices to quit and permitted increases in rent. These Acts are very complex and many of the points take up a considerable amount of time in giving information. It is regretted that despite approaches to the Ministry of Health by various Associations no action has yet been taken to amend these Acts, in which there are many anomalies.

X. Factories Act, 1937

1. INSPECTIONS

The following tables show the number of factories on the register, the number of inspections made and number of defects discovered, and the results of action taken.

Inspections for purposes of provisions as to Health

Premises	Number on Register	Number of Inspections Re-Visits	Number of Written Notices	Number of Occupiers prosecuted
(i) Factories in which Sections 1, 2, 3, 4 and 6 are to be enforced by Local Authorities	77	75	2	—
(ii) Factories not included in (i) in which Section 7 is enforced by the Local Authority	314	283	26	—
(iii) Other Premises in which Section 7 is enforced by the Local Authority (excluding outworkers' premises)...	17	37	—	—
Total	408	395	28	—

Cases in which Defects were found

Particulars	Number of cases in which defects were found				Number of cases in which prosecutions were instituted
	Found	Remedied	Referred to H.M. Inspector	Referred by H.M. Inspector	
Want of Cleanliness	—	—	—	—	—
Overcrowding	—	—	—	—	—
Inadequate Ventilation	1	—	—	—	—
Sanitary Conveniences :					
(a) Insufficient	1	—	—	—	—
(b) Unsuitable or defective ...	21	18	—	2	—
(c) Not separate for sexes ...	—	1	—	1	—
Other Offences against the Act (not including offences relating to outwork)	19	15	—	—	—
Total	42	34	—	3	—

2. OUTWORK

The following shows the number of outworkers on the register :—

Nature of Work	No. of Outworkers
Wearing apparel (making, etc.)	50
Household linen	2
Curtains and furniture hangings	1
Furniture and upholstery	3
Weaving of any textile fabric	1
Total	57

Visits of inspection were made and the premises were found to be in a satisfactory condition.

3. GENERAL

A complaint was received from residents relating to emission of fine dust, and noise made by machinery from a factory in the centre of the town. This was immediately investigated, when it was found that there were large accumulations of fine powder on the house roofs, window sills, and on the adjoining public road and footpaths.

On inspection of the factory concerned, it was found that this was due to a breakdown in a portion of the plant and obsolete machinery, and to lack of proper supervision.

The management was interviewed and as a result adjustments to and replacement of machinery was made. Certain structural alterations were also carried out.

From further observations there appears to be now no cause for complaint.

XI. Infectious Disease, Disinfection and Disinfestation

1. INFECTIOUS DISEASE

Investigations were made in certain cases of notifiable disease and the following up of contacts with such disease. In all, a total of 524 visits were made by the Sanitary Inspectors.

2. DISINFECTION

Disinfection of 172 rooms and 16,910 articles of bedding and clothing, etc., after cases of infectious disease, tuberculosis and cancer, were carried out.

In addition, steam disinfection of quantities of bedding, clothing, etc., was undertaken for bedding firms and national and local authorities' undertakings, for which moderate charges were made to cover expenses. A sum of £15 4s. 9d. was received in this connection.

By arrangement with libraries concerned, all books on issue to houses where infectious disease has occurred, are withdrawn by this Department for disinfection or destruction. After disinfection, books are returned direct to the libraries.

3. DISINFESTATION

The work of destroying insect pests of all types is carried out by this Department, and no charge is made for this service. The general method employed is by spraying liquid insecticides containing D.D.T. In certain cases, insecticide powder containing D.D.T. is used. The results of treatment were satisfactory in all cases.

The following table shows the number of infested premises treated, together with the type of infestation.

Premises	Nature of Vermin	Number of Premises	Number of Rooms
Houses—Council	Bugs	19	67
	Ants	20	29
	Beetles, etc.	17	37
Houses—Privately owned	Bugs	23	89
	Ants	9	19
	Beetles, etc.	47	131
Business Premises	Bugs	1	8
	Ants	—	—
	Beetles, etc.	4	14
Totals		140	394

At 10 premises, in addition to the above, it was found necessary, on inspection, to remove filthy bedding and clothing, etc., for destruction.

Following on complaint of smells at a flat, investigations were made and 181 filthy and contaminated milk bottles were discovered. The dairy owning the bottles were contacted, and on their instructions these were removed and destroyed.

XII. General

2. RAG FLOCK ACTS, 1911-1928

There are only a few premises at which rag flock is used by the furnishing trade, and as this material was supplied with guarantees of cleanliness, it was not considered necessary to take samples.

2. MERCHANDISE MARKS ACT, 1926

In order to ensure that the requirements with regard to labelling of certain imported commodities is complied with, 945 visits were made to shops, stalls and vehicles, and generally it can be stated that the regulations are being observed. Occasionally there has been a certain amount of laxity, but when attention has been drawn to this, immediate steps have been taken to remedy omissions made.

3. BATHS (HOT), COMMERCIAL ROAD

There are three baths available, and times of opening are as follows :

For men ... Saturdays and Sundays, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.

For women ... Fridays, 5 p.m. to 9 p.m.

The cost is 1s. per bath (soap and towel not being supplied).

Details of attendances are as follows :—

Males	1,350
Females	622
							<hr/>
Total	1,972
							<hr/>

The estimated number of baths which could be obtained is 24 per session, and from the above figures it will be seen that despite the large number of houses without baths, and the alleged demand for bathing facilities, the service is not being fully utilised.

4. OLD METAL AND MARINE STORES

The Sanitary Inspectors having been appointed authorised officers under the Public Health Acts Amendment Act, 1927, Section 86, for the purpose of ensuring that such premises are satisfactorily maintained and that suitable records are kept of all transactions in old metal, inspections were made of the six premises concerned and conditions were found to be satisfactory.

One establishment, included in the above, was closed during the year owing to the death of the proprietor.

5. TOWN PLANNING

In order to assist the Town Planning Consultant in advising the Council what proposals they should submit to the Planning Authority, a considerable amount of time was expended in making a general survey of houses in all parts of the borough in order to assess housing conditions generally. The plotting and classification of houses according to type, condition and general amenities was also undertaken by the Department.

6. RAILWAY PROPERTY

Inspections were made to the sanitary conveniences at both railway stations and these were found to be generally unsatisfactory. The Railway Executive were communicated with and as a result the sanitary accommodation at the Midland Station was improved, whilst the work at St. John's Station is to be undertaken in 1951.

7. OVERSEAS VISITORS

Members and officials of Local Government Councils from Mauritius and Germany visited Bedford during the year, and I conducted them on tours to various premises engaged in food production and distribution. Talks were also given to them on the work of the Public Health Department by the Medical Officer of Health and myself.

